

REMARKS

Applicant respectfully requests the Examiner to reconsider and withdraw the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, in view of the above clarifying/corrective amendments; corresponding amendments have been made to the text in the specification.

Applicant cancels without prejudice claim 1, thereby rendering **moot** the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) based on anticipation by Todoki '626.

Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection of claims 2 and 3 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable (obvious) over Todoki in view of Atsumi '569.

On pages 2 and 3 of the specification, Applicant describes, and discusses the disadvantages of, the prior art one-way clutches, torque limiters of the so-called magnetic particle type and solenoid-operated clutch mechanisms.

A primary novel and non-obvious feature of Applicant's invention is the friction clutch (frictional connection unit 66) as illustrated primarily in Applicant's Figs. 6, 7, 9 and 10 and described in Applicant's specification at pages 13-14 and 21-24. As explained in the specification, the claimed "frictional connection unit" has fewer parts, and is far less costly, than the prior art torque.

Todoki only briefly mentions (column 5, lines 37-53), and only schematically illustrates (Figs. 3 and 4), a torque limiter 28 of "the so-called magnet particle type".

Thus, notwithstanding the Examiner's assertion to the contrary on page 3 of the Office Action, Todoki does **not** disclose, or suggest, "a **frictional** connection unit for firmly coupling

said drive roller and said drive shaft with **frictional** force.” Furthermore, and again notwithstanding the Examiner’s assertion to the contrary, Todoki’s “roller [24] is [**not**] frictionally held on the shaft 27” but, rather, “the drive rollers 24 are mounted on respective roller shafts 27” which in turn are supported on a common drive shaft 26.

With respect to the rejection of claim 2, the Examiner **admits** that “Todoki does **not** disclose a frictional connection unit which further comprises: a fixing member fixed to said drive shaft; a friction member for contacting an end surface of said drive roller; and a biasing member provided between said fixing member and said friction member, said biasing member pressing said friction member to said end surface of said drive roller.”

Then, on page 4 of the Office Action, the Examiner asserts that Atsumi discloses a frictional connection unit including each of the elements admittedly missing from Todoki. However, Applicant respectfully submits that the Examiner errs in his analysis of Atsumi, at least in the fact that Atsumi does **not** disclose or teach at least Applicant’s claimed “friction member [74] for frictionally contacting an end surface of said drive roller” and/or “a biasing member provided between said fixing member and said friction member, said biasing member pressing said friction member against, and into frictional contact with, said end surface of said drive roller.” Rather, Atsumi’s element 74 is only a “holder 74 [which] is rotatably fixed on a shaft 73 . . .”, **not** “a friction member (74) for contacting an end surface of said drive roller” as asserted by the Examiner.

Furthermore, Atsumi's "biasing member (TL)" (the Examiner's words) does **not** press "said friction member against, and into frictional contact with, said end surface of said drive roller", as required by Applicant's claim 2 but, rather, is merely a spring TL which "is pressed in contact and wound around boss sections 74a, 75a of the holders 74 and 75".

Therefore, Applicant respectfully requests the Examiner reconsider and withdraw the rejection of claim 2.

For the rejection of claim 3, the Examiner merely states that "Atsumi discloses a coil spring (TL)".

Applicant's claim 3 further defines the "biasing member" of claim 2 as "a coil spring having a first end and a second end [wherein], said first end is fixed to said fixing member, and said second end is fixed to said friction member." Again, Atsumi's coil spring TL is clearly **not** "a biasing member pressing said friction member against, and into frictional contact with, said end surface of said drive roller".

Thus, Applicant also respectfully requests the Examiner to reconsider and withdraw the rejection of claim 3.

New claim 10 further restricts the location of the "friction member" of claim 2. Although the Examiner asserts that the element 74 of Atsumi '569 corresponds to the "friction member" of Applicant's invention, Applicant respectfully submits that Atsumi's element 74 is a holder for holding the roller 76, and that it has contact with surfaces other than the end surface of the roller 56.

Applicant notes the **allowability** of dependent claims **4-9** if they are rewritten in independent form and amended to overcome the rejection of 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph; however, Applicant respectfully requests the Examiner to hold in abeyance the rewriting of these claims until the Examiner has had an opportunity to reconsider (and withdraw) the rejection of claim 2 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a).

In summary, then, Applicant respectfully requests the Examiner to reconsider and withdraw the rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 112, 102(b) and 103(a), to find the application to be in condition for allowance for claims 2-10; however, if for any reason the Examiner feels that the application is not now in condition for allowance, he is respectfully requested to call the undersigned attorney to discuss any unresolved issues and to expedite the disposition of the application.

Applicant hereby petitions for any extension of time which may be required to maintain the pendency of this application, and any required fee for such extension is to be charged to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. The Commissioner is also authorized to charge any additional fees

AMENDMENT UNDER 37 C.F.R. § 1.111
U.S. Patent Application No.: 10/812,065

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under 37 C.F.R. § 1.16 and/or § 1.17 necessary to keep this application pending in the Patent and
Trademark Office or credit any overpayment to said Deposit Account No. 19-4880.

Respectfully submitted,

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